South. It looked sometimes as if wholesale massacres were prevented only by the presence of the Federal garrisons which were dispersed all over the country. It is painful to imagine what might have happened, had the restraining force of the Federal authority, ready for instant action, not been on the ground.

Indeed, nothing could have been more necessary at that period than the active interposition of the Federal power between the whites and the blacks of the South, not only to prevent or repress violent collisions, but to start the former masters and the former slaves on the path of peaceful and profitable co-operation as employers and free laborers. This was a difficult task. Northern men who had come to the South to purchase or lease plantations enjoyed the great advantage of having money so that they could pay the wages of their laborers in cash, which the negroes preferred. The Southern men, having been stripped almost naked by the war, had, aside from current sustenance, only prospective payment after harvest to offer, consisting mostly of a part of the crop. While many planters were just and even liberal in the making of cash contracts, others would take advantage of the ignorance of the negroes and try to tie them down to stipulations which left to the laborer almost nothing, or even oblige him to run in debt to the employers, and thus drop into the condition of a mere

peon—a debt-slave. It is a very curious fact that some of the forms of contract drawn up by former slave-holders contained provisions looking to the possibility of a future restoration of slavery. There was, not unnaturally, much distrust of the planters among the negroes, who, in concluding contracts, feared to compromise their rights as freedmen, or to be other-wise overreached. To allay that distrust and, in many cases, to secure their just dues, they stood niueh in need of an adviser